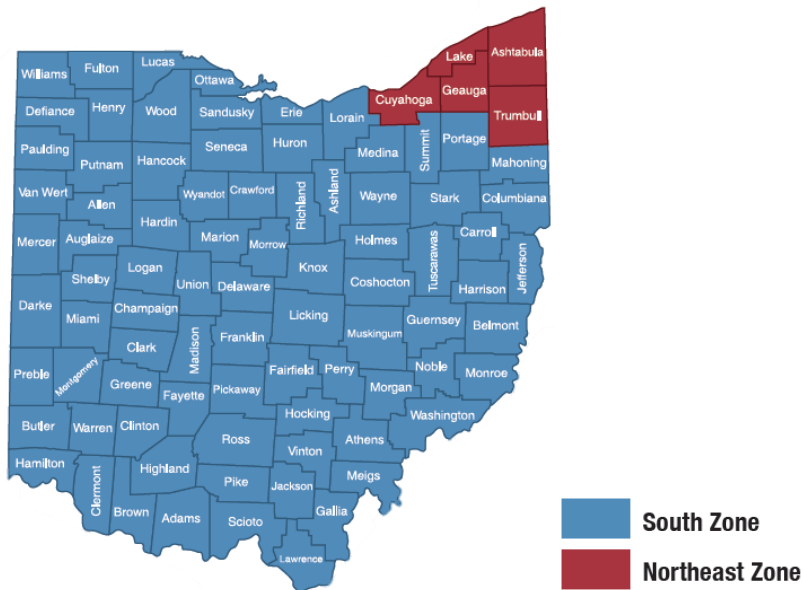




2023 SPRING WILD TURKEY SEASON RESULTS

Ohio's 2023 spring wild turkey season included two regular season zones (Figure 1) with offset dates. The south zone was open April 22 to May 21. The northeast zone was open April 29 to May 28. The two-day youth season was open statewide April 15-16. A spring turkey permit was required of residents and nonresidents in addition to a valid Ohio hunting license. Neither a permit nor license were required for landowners hunting on property they own. All turkeys harvested in Ohio were required to be reported to the Ohio Division of Wildlife by 11:30 p.m. on the day of harvest. The bag limit for the 2023 spring season was one bearded turkey. Hunting hours were 30 minutes before sunrise to noon during the first nine days of each zone and 30 minutes before sunrise to sunset during the last 21 days of the regular season.

Figure 1. Ohio's spring wild turkey zone map in 2023.



In total, 50,174 spring wild turkey permits were issued in 2023. This total is 3% above the 2022 spring season total (48,815). The bag limit was reduced from two birds to one prior to the 2022 season, which likely explains the notable drop in permits issued since 2022. Of all 2023 spring permits, 65%, 7%, and 16% were resident, nonresident, and youth permits, respectively. Approximately 13% of all permits issued were reduced cost or free permits (Table 1).

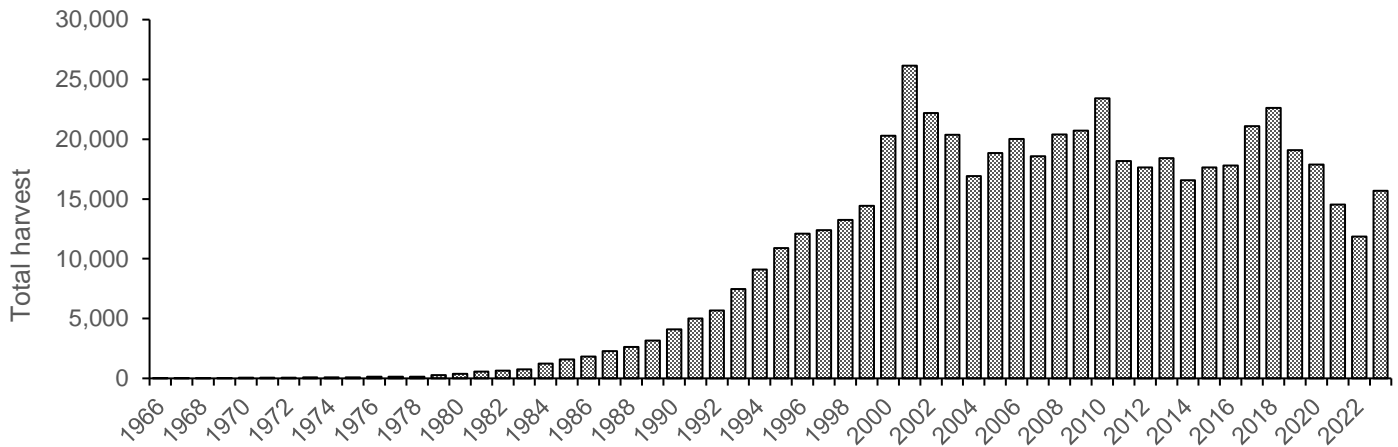
Table 1. Total spring wild turkey permits issued in Ohio during 2019-2023.

Year	Resident		Nonresident		Youth		Reduced Cost		Free		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
2019	41,589	65.4	4,761	7.5	7,948	12.5	5,756	9.0	3,550	5.6	63,604
2020	47,471	69.7	1,863	2.7	10,954	16.1	5,546	8.1	2,314	3.4	68,148
2021	39,398	64.4	4,859	7.9	9,005	14.7	5,703	9.3	2,170	3.5	61,135
2022 ^a	31,695	64.9	3,499	7.2	7,533	15.4	4,637	9.5	1,451	3.0	48,815
2023 ^a	32,458	64.7	3,638	7.3	7,886	15.7	4,798	9.6	1,394	2.8	50,174

^a The statewide bag limit was reduced from two to one in 2022.

Total turkey harvest during Ohio’s combined spring hunting seasons was 15,673 in 2023, an increase of 32% from 2022 (11,872). Total spring harvest increased annually from 1980-1999, a period when both hunting opportunity and the turkey population were expanding. Spring turkey season opened statewide in 2000 and spring harvest totals peaked in 2001. Spring harvest totals have fluctuated between 23,421 and 11,872 over the past two decades (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Total spring wild turkey harvest in Ohio during 1966-2023.



In 2023, Ohio turkey hunters reported 91% of the spring turkey harvest on private land and 9% of turkey harvest on public land. Landowner tags were used to take 2,548 turkeys, or 16% of the total spring harvest. The percentage of adult males in the total harvest (84%) was above the 5-year average (81%) while the percentage of juvenile males (15%) was below the 5-year average (18%). The percentage of bearded hens in the spring harvest was similar to previous years (Table 2). The percentages of turkeys taken by shotgun, vertical bow (compound, recurve, etc.), and crossbow were similar to 2022 (Table 3). The percentages of harvested male turkeys within specified spur length categories more closely resembled percentages from 2019-2021 than those in 2022 (Table 4).

Table 2. Summary of spring wild turkey harvest by turkey type during 2019-2023 in Ohio.

Year	<u>Adult male</u>		<u>Juvenile male</u>		<u>Bearded female</u>		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
2019	15,521	81.3	3,306	17.3	261	1.4	19,088
2020	14,875	83.1	2,686	15.0	333	1.9	17,894
2021	11,976	82.3	2,397	16.5	173	1.2	14,546
2022 ^a	8,791	74.1	2,950	24.8	131	1.1	11,872
2023 ^a	13,153	83.9	2,354	15.0	166	1.1	15,673

^a The statewide bag limit was reduced from two to one in 2022.

Table 3. Summary spring wild turkey harvest by hunting implement during 2019-2023 in Ohio.

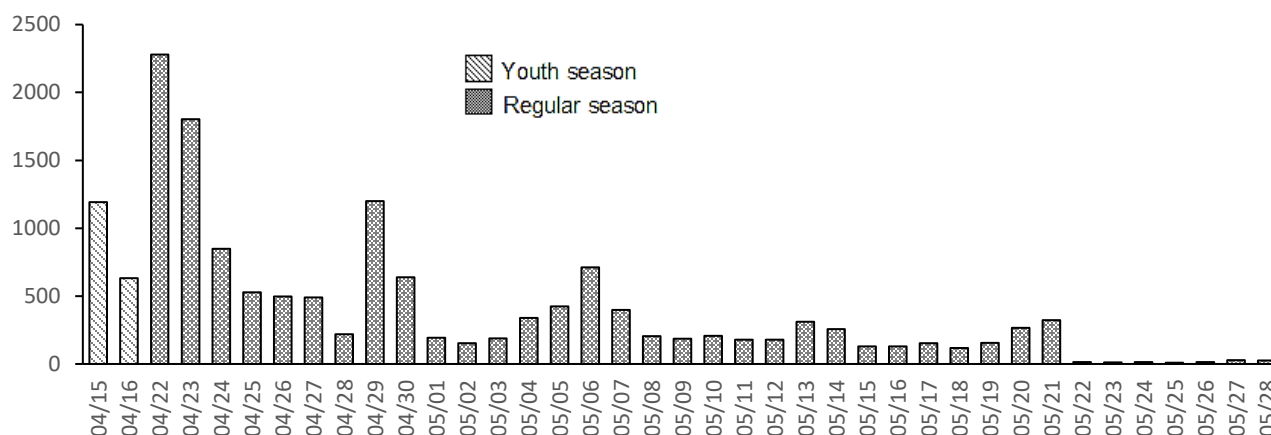
Year	<u>Shotgun</u>		<u>Vertical bow</u>		<u>Crossbow</u>		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
2019	18,660	97.8	262	1.4	166	0.9	19,088
2020	17,505	97.8	235	1.3	154	0.9	17,894
2021	14,264	98.1	172	1.2	110	0.8	14,546
2022	11,639	98.0	123	1.0	110	0.9	11,872
2023	15,360	98.0	173	1.1	140	0.9	15,673

Table 4. Summary of reported spur length for male turkeys harvested in Ohio during 2019-2023.

Year	1/2 inch or less		>1/2 inch but <1 inch		1 inch or greater		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
2019	3,758	20.0	4,066	21.6	11,003	58.4	18,827
2020	3,369	18.8	4,102	22.9	10,423	58.2	17,894
2021	2,720	18.9	3,229	22.5	8,424	58.6	14,373
2022	3,430	29.2	2,437	20.8	5,874	50.0	11,741
2023	2,918	18.6	3,994	25.5	8,761	55.9	15,673

Hunters checked 1,824 turkeys during the two-day youth season in 2023, a 65% increase from 2022 (1,103). The youth season accounted for 12% of the total spring harvest in 2023. Turkeys taken opening day of the regular season in the south zone (April 22) accounted for 15% of the total spring harvest. Approximately 43% of the total spring harvest occurred during the first week of the regular season in the south zone (April 22-28). Spikes in harvest were apparent on weekends throughout the season (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Total turkey harvest by day during the 2023 spring season in Ohio.



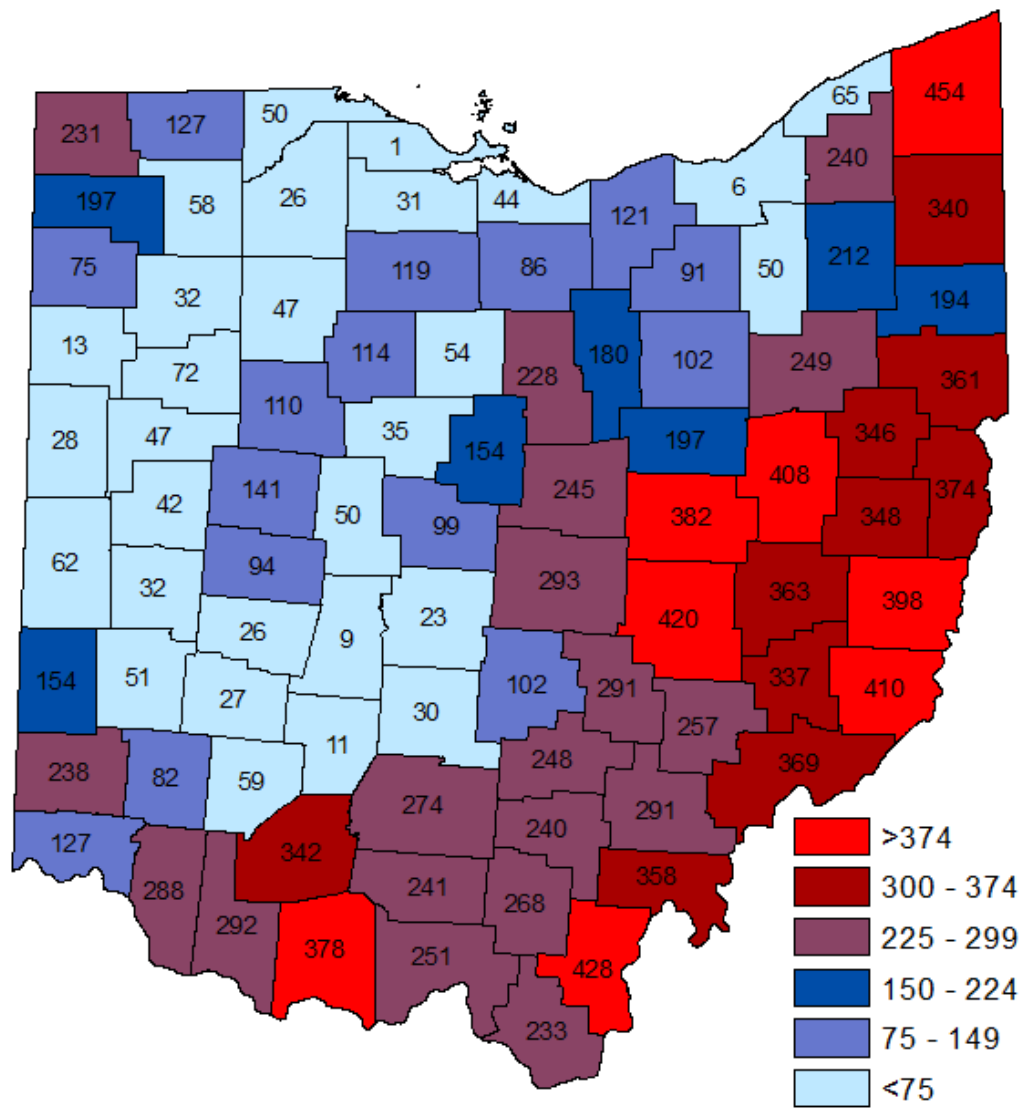
Approximately 27%, 29% and 31% of resident, nonresident and youth spring turkey permits, respectively, resulted in a reported harvest during 2023. Reduced cost permit holders were slightly less successful (20%) while only 5% of free permits resulted in a reported harvest. The percentage of reported harvest for each permit type increased from 2022 to 2023 (Table 5). We cannot determine landowner success rate since permits are only issued to landowners when reporting a harvest.

Table 5. Spring turkey permit success rate (%) during 2019-2023 in Ohio.

Year	Resident	Nonresident	Youth	Reduced cost	Free
2019	25.1	26.5	23.5	20.4	4.8
2020	20.2	19.4	22.5	17.2	4.9
2021	18.9	20.7	20.9	16.1	3.6
2022	20.9	21.4	23.0	16.7	3.5
2023	26.5	29.3	30.8	20.1	4.6

Counties in eastern Ohio reported the highest turkey harvest in the state in 2023. The top counties were Ashtabula (454), Gallia (428), Muskingum (420), Monroe (410), and Tuscarawas (408; Figure 4).

Figure 4. Total spring wild turkey harvest by Ohio county during 2023.



Appendix A. Spring wild turkey harvest totals for Ohio counties in 2023.

County	Adult Male	Juvenile Male	Bearded Female	TOTAL	County	Adult Male	Juvenile Male	Bearded Female	TOTAL
Adams	345	29	4	378	Licking	241	49	3	293
Allen	51	18	3	72	Logan	131	7	3	141
Ashland	140	33	7	180	Lorain	94	25	2	121
Ashtabula	362	83	9	454	Lucas	33	17	0	50
Athens	251	40	0	291	Madison	9	0	0	9
Auglaize	35	12	0	47	Mahoning	164	28	2	194
Belmont	356	42	0	398	Marion	22	12	1	35
Brown	251	37	4	292	Medina	71	19	1	91
Butler	217	16	5	238	Meigs	332	25	1	358
Carroll	290	55	1	346	Mercer	19	9	0	28
Champaign	82	12	0	94	Miami	29	3	0	32
Clark	21	5	0	26	Monroe	351	56	3	410
Clermont	254	32	2	288	Montgomery	43	6	2	51
Clinton	42	15	2	59	Morgan	196	59	2	257
Columbiana	299	58	4	361	Morrow	126	27	1	154
Coshocton	307	70	5	382	Muskingum	354	60	6	420
Crawford	43	10	1	54	Noble	279	56	2	337
Cuyahoga	5	1	0	6	Ottawa	1	0	0	1
Darke	45	15	2	62	Paulding	56	18	1	75
Defiance	168	27	2	197	Perry	249	41	1	291
Delaware	85	14	0	99	Pickaway	29	1	0	30
Erie	37	7	0	44	Pike	218	21	2	241
Fairfield	79	21	2	102	Portage	173	39	0	212
Fayette	10	1	0	11	Preble	128	23	3	154
Franklin	20	2	1	23	Putnam	28	4	0	32
Fulton	96	28	3	127	Richland	187	39	2	228
Gallia	379	47	2	428	Ross	242	29	3	274
Geauga	192	44	4	240	Sandusky	22	9	0	31
Greene	18	9	0	27	Scioto	233	17	1	251
Guernsey	295	64	4	363	Seneca	78	35	6	119
Hamilton	121	6	0	127	Shelby	37	5	0	42
Hancock	42	5	0	47	Stark	205	43	1	249
Hardin	91	16	3	110	Summit	38	12	0	50
Harrison	288	57	3	348	Trumbull	279	56	5	340
Henry	41	16	1	58	Tuscarawas	326	74	8	408
Highland	299	41	2	342	Union	38	11	1	50
Hocking	220	27	1	248	Van Wert	8	4	1	13
Holmes	153	41	3	197	Vinton	200	37	3	240
Huron	61	25	0	86	Warren	70	12	0	82
Jackson	230	37	1	268	Washington	326	38	5	369
Jefferson	302	68	4	374	Wayne	80	22	0	102
Knox	210	32	3	245	Williams	208	22	1	231
Lake	56	8	1	65	Wood	17	7	2	26
Lawrence	207	26	0	233	Wyandot	87	25	2	114
					Statewide				
					Total	13,153	2,354	166	15,673

Appendix B. Ohio's spring wild turkey season dates, regulations, permits, and total harvest, 1966-2022.

Year	Season Dates	Open Counties	Bag Limit	Permit Fee	Permits Issued ^a	Total Harvest ^b
1966	05/04 – 05/07	9	1	Free	500	12
1967	05/03 – 05/06	9	1	Free	898	18
1968	05/08 – 05/11	9	1	Free	914	20
1969	05/07 – 05/10	9	1	Free	945	37
1970	04/29 – 05/02	14	1	Free	909	30
	05/06 – 05/09				896	36
1971	04/28 – 05/01	14	1	Free	1,000	37
	05/05 – 05/08				1,000	17
1972	05/03 – 05/06	14	1	\$5.35	917	32
	05/10 – 05/13				881	25
1973	05/02 – 05/05	14	1	\$5.35	1,034	39
	05/09 – 05/12				1,034	32
1974	05/01 – 05/04	14	1	\$10.50	999	61
	05/08 – 05/11				184	10
1975	04/28 – 05/03	14	1	\$10.50	996	75
	05/05 – 05/10				267	19
1976	04/26 – 05/08	14	1	\$10.50	1,471	139
1977	05/02 – 05/14	14	1	\$10.50	1,751	137
1978	05/01 – 05/13	18	1	\$10.50	2,000	147
1979	04/30 – 05/12	18	1	\$10.50	2,000	265
1980	04/21 – 05/03	20	1	\$10.75	2,097	387
1981	04/27 – 05/09	20	1	\$10.75	3,458	577
1982	04/26 – 05/08	20	1	\$10.75	4,262	651
1983	04/25 – 05/07	21	1	\$10.75	5,141	764
1984	04/23 – 05/12	31	1	\$10.75	6,935	1,233
1985	04/22 – 05/11	31	1	\$10.75	10,084	1,583
1986	04/28 – 05/17	31	1	\$10.75	11,913	1,816
1987	04/27 – 05/16	32	1	\$10.75	13,396	2,268
1988	04/25 – 05/14	32	1	\$11.00	16,208	2,629
1989	04/24 – 05/13	36	1	\$11.00	18,887	3,171
1990	04/23 – 05/12	37	1	\$16.00	19,613	4,096
1991	04/22 – 05/11	38	1	\$16.00	22,898	5,009
1992	04/27 – 05/16	38	1	\$16.00	28,974	5,678
1993	04/26 – 05/15	42	1	\$16.00	29,538	7,470
			2	\$32.00	4,106	
1994	04/25 – 05/14	44	1	\$16.00	29,334	9,098
			2	\$32.00	5,187	
1995	04/24 – 05/13	44	1	\$20.00	30,837	10,892
			2	\$40.00	6,136	
1996	04/22 – 05/11	46	1	\$20.00	31,003	12,098
			2	\$40.00	7,700	
1997	04/28 – 05/17	47	1	\$20.00	30,511	12,393
			2	\$40.00	8,130	
1998	04/27 – 05/16	50	1	\$20.00	31,037	13,251
			2	\$40.00	8,133	
1999	04/26 – 05/16	57	1	\$20.00	42,363	14,419
			2	\$40.00	7,846	
2000	04/24 – 05/14	88	1	\$20.00	49,982	20,276
			2	\$40.00	9,720	
2001	04/23 – 05/13	88	1	\$20.00	54,841	26,156
			2	\$40.00	11,092	
2002	04/22 – 05/19	88	1	\$20.00	48,821	22,190
			2	\$40.00	24,633	
2003 ^c	04/28 – 05/25	88	2	\$20.00	94,989	20,368
2004	04/26 – 05/23	88	2	\$24.00	74,119	16,927
2005	04/18 – 05/15	88	2	\$24.00	85,053	18,833
2006	04/24 – 05/21	88	2	\$24.00	85,248	20,023

2007	04/23 – 05/20	88	2	\$24.00	75,408	18,584
2008	04/21 – 05/18	88	2	\$24.00	79,962	20,389
2009	04/20 – 05/17	88	2	\$24.00	81,049	20,710
2010	04/19 – 05/16	88	2	\$24.00	78,388	23,421
2011	04/18 – 05/15	88	2	\$24.00	76,665	18,162
2012	04/23 – 05/20	88	2	\$24.00	70,291	17,657
2013	04/22 – 05/19	88	2	\$24.00	73,914	18,409
2014	04/21 – 05/18	88	2	\$24.00	68,960	16,568
2015	04/20 – 05/17	88	2	\$24.00	65,883	17,652
2016	04/18 – 05/15	88	2	\$24.00	66,436	17,805
2017 ^d	04/24 – 05/21	83				
	05/01 – 05/28	5	2	\$24.00 ^e	65,486	21,097
2018 ^d	04/23 – 05/20	83				
	04/30 – 05/27	5	2	\$24.00 ^e	63,838	22,612
2019 ^d	04/22 – 05/19	83				
	04/29 – 05/26	5	2	\$24.00 ^e	63,604	19,088
2020 ^d	04/20 – 05/17	83				
	05/04 – 05/31	5	2	\$31.20 ^e	68,148	17,894
2021 ^d	04/24 – 05/23	83				
	05/01 – 05/30	5	2	\$31.20 ^e	61,135	14,546
2022 ^d	04/23 – 05/22	83				
	04/30 – 05/29	5	1	\$31.20 ^e	48,815	11,872
2023 ^d	04/22 – 05/21	83				
	04/29 – 05/28	5	1	\$31.20 ^e	50,174	15,673

^aIncludes all permit types.

^bTotal recorded harvest by all hunter types.

^cThe special bonus wild turkey permit was eliminated in 2003. Hunters no longer classified as one-bird or two-bird permit holders.

^dSouth and Northeast Zones established in 2017 with offset dates.

^eIncludes resident permit fee only.